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SUBJECT: U.S. AND JAPAN DISCUSS BURMA, AFGHANISTAN, DPRK,
IRAN, AND UN REFORM

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Classified By: Ambassador Alejandro D. Wolff, per 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Summary. At Japanese request, Amb Khalilzad and Japanese PermRep Yukio Takasu held a wide-ranging consultation on October 22 on issues currently before the UNSC as well as on UN reform. On Burma, Takasu urged increased pressure on the regime, but argued against actions which risk losing UNSC consensus. On Afghanistan, Amb Khalilzad described U.S. interest in a high-level envoy appointed by the SYG or a high-profile SRSG, and Takasu suggested consideration of a Japanese official for the post. On DPRK and the six-party talks, Takasu said Japan would be satisfied with progress rather than an immediate solution to the abductee issue, and trusts the U.S. will "not sacrifice its bilateral relationship with Japan to make a deal with North Korea." On Iran, Amb Khalilzad described the three-track strategy pursued by the P5 1, and noted that work continues on a third sanctions resolution should no positive outcome transpire on the other two tracks by November. Takasu argued UNSC unity on Iran is essential for progress. On UNSC reform, Takasu argued for seizing a "window of opportunity" before next summer's Olympics to move forward. But Amb Khalilzad emphasized that no expansion of the UNSC would be possible without broad reform of the UN. On other issues, Takasu agreed that the time was right to move forward on mandate review. He acknowledged that the UN budget submission was excessive but cautioned against embarrassing SYG Ban. Lastly, Takasu urged that the U.S. view the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) with fresh eyes given Japan's chairmanship and make a contribution to the PBC fund. End Summary.

Burma: More Pressure But No Chinese Veto

¶2. (C) Takasu argued that the Council should continue to apply pressure on Burma but should stop short of actions which would risk breaking consensus in the UNSC or provoke a Chinese veto. Noting that Ban's special adviser Ibrahim Gambari was traveling to Japan and would soon travel to Burma, Takasu made several points about how to encourage progress in Burma. First, Gambari could convene an informal Core Group, which could include the P-5, Japan, India, Singapore, and other countries. Takasu was skeptical of the value of including Norway, as Gambari had proposed. Second, the international community should continue to press China to use its influence with the Burmese government. Although Japan had engaged the PRC at a high level on this subject, Takasu was doubtful that Burma had heard the right message from China. Third, although Japan had decreased its aid to

Burma -- including by suspending a human resources center it planned to build -- Takasu said it would be difficult to cut the remaining humanitarian assistance. Fourth, Takasu stressed the important role of Singapore, noting that several Burmese leaders have bank accounts there. He praised Singapore's strategy on Burma as being "very realistic," as it has been harshly critical of the government, but is also against sanctions.

¶3. (C) Ambassador Khalilzad agreed that the international community needed a comprehensive strategy to encourage progress in Burma and suggested that we use the time before the ASEAN summit on November 19-21 to apply maximum pressure on the regime. He urged the Japanese to send a strong message to the Singaporean FM, expected in Tokyo on October 27, on the need for change in Burma. Noting that the U.S. had just imposed expanded sanctions on the Burmese regime, Ambassador Khalilzad suggested that the UNSC might also threaten sanctions to force change. But he recognized that the UN is only one tool in this process. As for Gambari's visit, Ambassador Khalilzad expressed disappointment that the Burmese had agreed to a meeting only in the first week of November, and noted that the Chinese FM had promised to work on this issue. He assessed more flexibility on the part of China and Russia towards setting up a Core Group on Burma, and agreed that Gambari should convene this group soon. Ambassador Khalilzad echoed Gambari's opinion that it would be useful to include Norway in the Core Group if Oslo is prepared to contribute funds to support reconciliation and democratization in Burma.

Afghanistan: Consider Japanese for SRSG

¶4. (C) Briefing on the series of high-level meetings held on Afghanistan during the UNGA, Ambassador Khalilzad focused on

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the successor to SRSG Koenigs and whether it would be useful to also appoint a high-level envoy (HLE) to sustain international support for Afghanistan in capitals as well as take on a regional role. Noting the division within the UNSC on whether the HLE is needed, he suggested such an envoy would not be necessary if the SRSG is of sufficiently high stature, and said the U.S. would soon produce a paper on the HLE. Running through names of possible SRSGs / HLEs, the Ambassador mentioned former UK MP Paddy Ashdown, former NATO rep. in Afghanistan Hikmet Cetin, Norwegian political director Kai Eide, and former German FM Joschka Fischer. Ambassador Khalilzad said UK PermRep had confirmed that Ashdown is interested in the job, but noted that Afghan President Karzai has some doubts about appointing a British official given the UK's history in Afghanistan.

¶5. (C) Takasu said he had raised with SYG Ban the absence of any Japanese SRSGs and suggested to Ambassador Khalilzad that a Japanese official might be considered for the Afghanistan position. Although his staff later told USUN that the GOJ has yet to decide whether to support this nomination, Takasu suggested that former Japanese Ambassador to Afghanistan Komano might be one candidate for the job. Regarding the other candidates, Takasu suggested that the SYG was reluctant to appoint Fischer, given that Koenigs is also German. Takasu concluded the discussion on Afghanistan by expressing appreciation for the cooperation with USUN on the negotiation of UNSCR 1776. Although the OEF issue is still very sensitive in Japan, he said the fact that the parliamentary bill authorizing further deployments could quote language from a Security Council resolution would help its chances of passage.

DPRK: Expect U.S. Support on Abductees

¶6. (C) Although Takasu expressed satisfaction with progress in the six-party talks, and noted that the new Japanese PM

wants to normalize relations with the DPRK, he made clear this would not be possible without progress on the issue of Japanese citizens abducted by North Korea. Characterizing DPRK responses on this issue so far as "insincere," Takasu said North Korea could take steps such as re-opening the investigation into the fate of the abductees to demonstrate sincerity. He acknowledged that this issue cannot be settled immediately, adding that Japan would be satisfied for now with "progress" rather than a "solution." Takasu expressed appreciation for assurances from Secretary Rice and others that the U.S. "would not sacrifice the U.S.-Japan relationship to make a deal with North Korea."

¶ 17. (C) Takasu noted that Japan would again work with the EU to submit a resolution in the UNGA third committee on the human rights situation in the DPRK. Lastly, he said that Japan sees two possibilities for UNSC involvement in the DPRK issue: either the six-party process fails, in which Japan would expect UNSC involvement immediately, or the six-party talks succeed, in which case the UNSC could eventually endorse the agreement. Ambassador Khalilzad pledged to work with Japan on the third committee resolution and said the U.S. would continue to be sensitive to Japanese views on the abductee issue.

Iran: Pursuing Three Tracks Simultaneously

¶ 18. (C) Ambassador Khalilzad explained that the U.S. continues to pursue a three-track strategy on the Iranian nuclear issue. The first track is the Larijani-El Baradei agreement with timetable for implementation, although the Ambassador noted that this agreement does not address the suspension of uranium enrichment. The second are the meetings between Solana and new Secretary of the Supreme National Security Council Jalili. Ambassador Khalilzad mentioned that we do not yet have a good understanding of what President Putin told the Iranians in Tehran nor the reasons behind Ali Larijani's recent resignation. The third track is the effort to sanction Iran in the UNSC. Ambassador Khalilzad acknowledged that the third sanctions resolution is a work in progress, but noted that P5 + 1 FMs had agreed to continue work on the SCR so that we could move quickly in the Council if the first two tracks do not result in a positive outcome in November.

¶ 19. (C) Takasu, recalling his days in Vienna as Japan's IAEA representative, confirmed that Japan has "no confidence" in

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Iran's stated nuclear intentions. As a result, he agreed that the IAEA work plan is insufficient to assuage the international community's concerns about the Iranian nuclear program. But Takasu also emphasized that Japan believes unity of the UNSC is essential. It is "crucial" to maintain Russian and Chinese support for international policy towards Iran, he argued, lest the Iranians benefit from differences between world powers. He reported that Japan had decided to restrict its export credits to Iran, had suspended dealings with banks implicated in the nuclear program, and had reduced its stake in a joint oil project from 75 percent to 10 percent. Takasu also mentioned that during a bilateral meeting on the margins of UNGA, the Japanese FM had taken a "very tough" line with Iranian FM Mottaki, repeatedly urging Iran to suspend uranium enrichment and come into line with UNSC demands.

UNSC Reform: Which Reforms Go First?

¶ 10. (C) Expressing appreciation for President Bush's UNGA comments about UNSC reform, Takasu described a "small window of opportunity" to reform the Council before next summer, when the Olympic Games begin in Beijing and the U.S. will become focused on its presidential elections. Noting the importance of obtaining African support, Takasu said certain

African states are deviating from their demand for two permanent seats with veto power. With a "weakened" UFC bloc and an "energized" PGA, he suggested it might be possible to find a formula that could achieve two-thirds support. Japan and its G-4 partners are now discussing proposals for the inter-governmental negotiations on UNSC reform set to begin this year, which he predicted would result in changes to the G-4 approach. The question now, Takasu said, is who will manage these negotiations and on what basis they will be conducted. He argued that "every effort" should be made to achieve concrete progress by next summer.

¶11. (C) Ambassador Khalilzad said the U.S. is open-minded about UNSC reform but that the right conditions for broad reform of the UN must also be in place to put together an attractive overall package. He suggested the SYG's upcoming retreat on UN reform, now tentatively scheduled for January 2008, would be a good forum to discuss the elements of this package. Takasu agreed that broad reform of the UN is important but objected to any "linkage" between these reforms and expansion of the UNSC. We cannot place UNSC reform in a "straightjacket," he insisted, by blocking inter-governmental negotiations if there is no broader reform of the UN. Ambassador Khalilzad told Takasu that UNSC reform on its own could not be accepted by the U.S. without other elements of system-wide reform.

Mandate Review, UN Budget, PBC

¶12. (C) USUN/MR Counselor underscored that the mandate review process should be re-energized and that the recent meeting of Member States with the PGA provided an opportunity to move forward. He said the two important questions now are how to identify the mandates to focus on and the role of the SYG in moving the process forward. Takasu agreed that the elements provided by the PGA has created goodwill among PermReps focused on mandate review and declared that Japan was ready to start engaging in the process again. Takasu suggested that JUSCANZ could be the "motor" through which to make progress, and that PermReps could meet to plot strategy and then experts could follow up on the details soon thereafter.

¶13. (C) Turning to the UN budget, Takasu argued that the most important goal is to approve the budget submission -- including the Capital Master Plan -- by Christmas. While he agreed that the budget request seemed excessive -- Japan believes the year-over-year increase is 12 percent rather than the U.S. figure of 15 percent -- Takasu argued it was important not to embarrass SYG Ban through the budget process. At the same time, he agreed with Ambassador Khalilzad that the UN could not just constantly add budget items onto its original submission, and noted the need to find additional savings and restrain growth in future budgets. In regard to this budget, Takasu expressed concern by the manner in which the SYG unfolded DPA's proposed budget increase as well the size of that increase, which he described as quite large. He suggested that the U.S. and Japan might want to send a joint letter to the SYG on the UN budget.

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¶14. (C) Takasu urged that the U.S. to take a fresh look at the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) now that Japan has assumed the chair. Contrary to the past year, Takasu said he would focus on ensuring the PBC actually gets work done and assists the UNSC where possible. He urged USUN to devote higher-level attention to the PBC and to contribute to the PBC fund. Noting that Japan had donated USD 10 million to the UN democracy fund at U.S. request, Takasu asked that the U.S. consider contributing to the PBC fund.

Khalilzad